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عظة صاحب الغبطة البطريرك يوحنا العاشر في قداس عيد القدّيسين بطرس وبولس موٴسسي الكرسي الالٴنطاكي الكاتدرايٴيّة المريميّة في دمشق ٢٩-٦-٢٠٢٠



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عظة صاحب الغبطة البطريرك يوحنا العاشر في قداس عيد القدّيسين بطرس وبولس موٴسسي الكرسي الالٴنطاكي الكاتدرايٴيّة المريميّة في دمشق ٢٩-٦-٢٠٢٠“Grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”.Beloved, I start my speech with this apostolic blessing that belong to Apostles Peter and Paulsaying to the faithful:“Grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”Indeed, beloved ones, upon this glorious day and blessed feast of the Holy Chiefs of the Apostles,Peter and Paul, founders of our Antiochian Church,I address all our children of the Holy Antiochian Apostolic See in the

homeland and abroad, over the whole world, wherever they are:our brethren the metropolitans, bishops, priests, deacons, monastic men and women,and the people who love God.I address all of you this apostolic greeting, wishing all of you good health, strength, and continuous prosperity.Beloved ones, especially today, as we gaze upon the example of Peter and Paul, we learn a lot of things.We learn from their lives, their words, and the writings they left for us.Let us contemplate the gospel passage that we heard in the divine liturgy today,From the gospel of Matthew, chapter 16.We heard that the Lord asked his disciples, in Caesarea of Philip: what do people say about me?They answered: Some say that you are John the Baptist, others say that you are Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.-He said: And who do YOU say that I am?Now Peter got excited, as usual, and answered:You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.Jesus answered and said to him:“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are also Peter, and on this rock, I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.You are Peter, and on this rock: the rock is Jesus ChristThe confession of faith uttered by Peter:“You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God”On this confession of faith, on this rock, I build my church.Indeed, Peter the Apostle with Paul the Apostle, built the church of Antioch on this rock of faith, and as the Lord said, the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.It stays forever, by God’s compassion and mercy.Here we are, beloved, living in times of tribulation and hardship, in worry, in trouble, in wars, conflicts, and fights.In our days, we live in this troubled, worried, and tumultuous world, that does not know any reconciliation or peace.Here we ask ourselves: Do we remain steadfast in this world?Will the church remain steadfast and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it, despite all these hardships?Yes, indeed!We are steadfast, we are rooted in our faith, and we hold on to this deposit of faith committed to us. By the mercies of the Lord our God, it is steadfast forever;the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.Here, let us remember also Apostle Paul.Paul the Apostle said that nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ.No war, no sword, no death, no kidnapping, no hardship, no distress.Nothing separates us from the love of Christ.Indeed, as children of this church, we hold on to this deposit of faith committed to us.We will never give up this faith.Therefore, Saint Paul also says elsewhere, in his epistle to the Romans, chapter

5:“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace, this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory – this passage was read yesterday during the Sunday Liturgy-We also glory in tribulations, we glory in distress, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint.Indeed, amidst these hardships and tribulations,today, in this world of commercialism and interestsa world, alas, with fallen values, morals, and ethics.However, amidst these hardships and tribulations, as Paul the Apostle says, we hold on to the hope in Christ.This hope in Christ, that is built on the grace and mercies of Christ, this hope shall never disappoint us.This is the Apostolic blessing by which the Apostles Peter and Paul used to address the faithful:“Grace and peace to you”.First: graceYes, we seek grace first, we ask for God’s grace and mercy,for it is by God’s grace that we vanquish and conquer.Indeed, by God’s mercies and grace, we face all these distresses and challenges in these days.Therefore, we ask for graceHe also says: grace and peaceThen, peaceThis is the peace that we seek and always pray for:For the peace from above, let us pray to the Lord.It is the peace about which the Lord Jesus said to his disciples:My peace I give to you; my peace is not from this world.This peace, no one can take from you.We long for this peace.Therefore, today we pray, beloved ones, especially on this blessed feast day of the Apostles Peter and Paul, asking that the grace and mercies of God may come down upon us, on our hearts, on the whole world.May peace come upon our hearts, on each one of us, May peace come on the beloved country and the whole worldIt is the peace that every human seeks to live in quietude and happiness.We also remember especially Bishop Paul, the Metropolitan of Aleppo,Who, due to the unfortunate circumstances, is not with us in the body.After all these years, almost eight years now, he is still with us in the spirit.Wherever he is, we pray for him and he prays for us.I conclude by addressing again my greetings to all our beloved brethren in the Apostolic Antiochian Holy See.Wherever you are, I address to them the words of the Apostle Peter to the faithful in his epistle:May the abundance of grace and peace be with youMany years.AmenHomily of His Beatitude Patriarch John XFeast Day of Apostles Peter and PaulJune 29, 2020#يوحنا_العاشر

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